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# Sculptured Crosses

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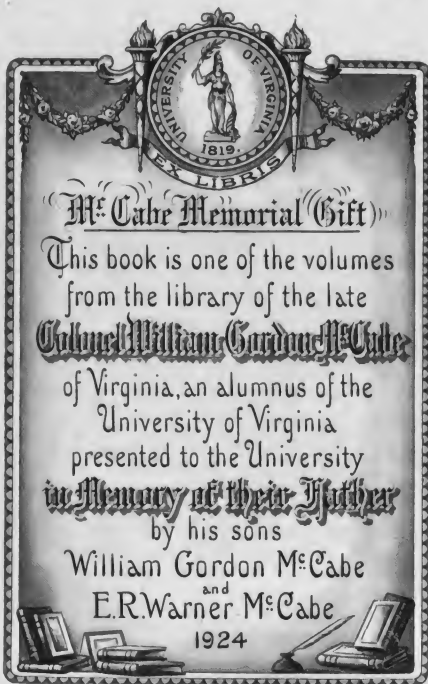
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Sculptured crosses of ancient



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To  
Col. W. Gordon M<sup>c</sup> Cabe  
With the Compliment of  
Harry Lewis Kane  
1916.















# Sculptured Crosses *of* Ancient Ireland

Henry O'Neill



A. M. HUNT COMPANY  
Boston, Mass.  
*Publishers*

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## PRÆFACE

THE material for this little book on Sculptured Crosses was taken from the text and illustrations given in O'Neill's celebrated book on "Sculptured Crosses of Ancient Ireland." This book of O'Neill's was published in 1857 and is now out of print, with only two or three known copies in existence.

The present volume has been carefully gotten together and published to save to the monument trade the valuable information about these old crosses of Ireland as well as to preserve to the trade the wonderful illustrations that are shown in this book.

Celtic Crosses in their more modern and modified form are more in favor than ever before and it is hoped that this little book will prove of great value to the monument trade.

GEO. R. FORD,  
*Editor.*



## PREFACE

By HARRY LEWIS RAUL.

**O**F the ancient race inhabiting Ireland and referred to in history as Celts or Kelts, little is accurately known. However, there have been found numerous relics in the forms of metal, stone work and manuscripts of wonderfully intricate and exquisite design, from a careful study of which much may be learned about the character of the civilization of the period at which they were produced and much in regard to the art of the early craftsman. Art has always been a true index and record of not only the deeds but the inspirations and aspirations of humanity. No artist can paint or carve without indelibly placing, whether consciously or unconsciously, upon his work the seal and character of his time and thus these ancient relics of Celtic art tell us of the high order of civilization attained by the Celtic race centuries ago. Much has been written of the exquisite metal work and marvelously beautiful illuminated manuscripts and pottery of ancient Ireland, but until Henry O'Neill brought to the study of the ancient Celtic crosses his enthusiasm and careful scholarship, little has been done to place this subject adequately before the public.

This book, under the title of "The Most Interesting of the Sculptured Crosses of Ancient Ireland," drawn to scale and lithographed by Henry O'Neill, was first published by him in London in 1857. The original

book has long been out of print, and the copies in existence are very rare. O'Neill brought to the work the care and precision of a trained antiquary as well as a native love and enthusiasm for all that is Irish. His deductions in regard to a prehistoric cross in Ireland are extremely interesting, though some of his views have not borne the test of criticism with complete success.

O'Neill's book comprises probably the most complete and authoritative treatise on the Celtic cross now available, and may be regarded as of especial importance at this time, for the Celtic cross is increasing in popularity as any visit to one of our modern cemeteries will demonstrate. The tendency towards a revival of the Celtic memorial is very apparent. The beauty and ecclesiastic spirit of this form of memorial is being more and more appreciated by the general public. The beautiful Celtic cross satisfies a modern desire for ornament and intricacy of design and at the same time possesses a dignity which was lacking in many of the older types of elaborately carved memorials. At a recent exhibition of women's sculptures in New York City a model of a Celtic cross was considered to be among the most notable of all the exhibits. The fact that the cross is being recognized in the best art circles cannot but have an effect upon the popular demand. The Celtic cross occupies a more prominent place in monument designing than ever before, and it lends itself to an endless variety of modifications suitable for modern adaptation.

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HARRY LEWIS RAUL, EASTON, PA.

A noted young sculptor who declares that much of our modern work is mechanically perfect but lacks artistic spirit.

Architecturally, the Celtic crosses are beautiful in design and proportion, and they easily take a high place among the most dignified of ancient memorials.

Sculpturally, these crosses have their chief value as examples of ornamental and decorative carving. While the treatment of the human and the animal figures was immature and grotesque, and without a true sense of grace and proportion, when the ancient carvers of the Celtic crosses have applied them in an ornamental way—which was their chief use of these motifs—they have made unique and admirable use of them from a decorative point of view.

The Celtic cross and its modifications present a rich field for modern adaptation and offer opportunities for exquisite modelling and carving, with less primitive treatment of the human figure, as has been clearly manifested in some recent modern uses of this old convention, notably the John Ruskin cross, which portrays in a series of panels of beautiful bas-reliefs the main incidents and achievements of the great English author's life.

In many of the modern copies of the Celtic cross, as they appear in our cemeteries, the chief fault lies in the altogether too much stress that is placed upon purely mechanical perfection which has resulted in a considerable loss of the spirit of the original fine old carvings. Too close adherence to the use of the scale-rule and calipers in this kind of work renders the result mechanically perfect, but, on the other hand, the effect is cold and meaningless in the feeling produced; whereas, when the circles and lines are drawn and carved freely, of course with a just regard to proper proportion, the result embodies a certain richness of

design and a seeming movement of light and shade, a plasticity and rhythm, which is infinitely more pleasing in effect, as is clearly evident in the original ancient Celtic crosses.

The variety of the designs of the crosses, as well as the endless diversity of the decorative patterns and ornamentation applied to the original Celtic crosses, bear eloquent witness to the inventive genius of these patient and devoted artists and stone carvers of long ago. They evidently did not feel bound to servilely follow the conventional, but on the contrary they seemed to set their fancies free, their understanding of the true principles of decorative ornament and designing, never, however, permitting them to transgress the natural bounds of good taste. This freedom of execution is more evident in their stone and metal work than in the mechanically more accurate manuscripts, where, however, the beautifully blended coloring produces a most charming effect.

The chief peculiarities of Celtic ornamentation consist of the complete absence of foliage in their designs, the lavish intricacies and minuteness of the patterns, which are mainly geometrical and are made up mostly of intertwined ribbon work and spiral lines, and also in the use of strange and fanciful animals, birds and snakes, with extremities winding away into long curves and intricate ingenious knots. Human figures are frequently intertwined in this manner in the manuscripts and, as will be noted, in one of the patterns of the Monasterboice Southeast cross.

The most general and most elaborate ornaments used by all workers in stone, metal and manuscripts



are composed of one or more long strands of ribbon or rope intertwined and linked continually in their courses by a series of loosely tied and extremely complicated knots, the whole forming beautiful, harmonious, geometrical patterns.

A very characteristic Celtic pattern is that made by several spiral lines beginning at a fixed point and running off into diverging spirals to meet and merge into other similar spiral lines.

Another characteristic series of patterns with an endless number of modifications is caused by the use of diagonal straight lines formed into a Z pattern endlessly repeated in various relations with each other.

The perfection of workmanship of the ancient Celtic craftsmen and the maturity of the designs which have come down to us through the centuries mutely speak of a long, consistent and progressive development, and they bring before the imagination suggestions of the ancient people who contrived and perfected them. We think of the great assemblies of the chieftains of the Celtic tribes held triennially at Tara, the ancient capital, upon the site of which only a solitary stone remains to mark the place of the ancient scenes of splendor. We read of Tara's banquet hall, 700 feet in length, with long rows of benches, lighted by a hundred altars and council fires, wherein the great chiefs, arrayed in gorgeous robes and marvelously wrought ornaments met in conclave.

We picture the scenes of hard-fought battles of conquest against the Danes, with weapons highly wrought with consummate skill, of surging combats around the massive stone forts that still remain, though some of

them are now in ruins. We seek to fathom the mystery of the meaning of the ancient round stone towers, whose firm masonry still remains intact beside the later Christian chapels and the beautiful crosses; and, as one ponders over the ancient Celtic race in Ireland, and, in fancy, repeoples the now barren hill of Tara, and seeks to reconstruct the splendor of this ancient people, the beautiful living lines of Tom Moore speak:

The harp that once through Tara's halls  
The soul of music shed,  
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls  
As if that soul were fled.  
So sleeps the pride of former days,  
So glory's thrill is o'er,  
And hearts that once beat high for praise,  
Now feel the pulse no more.

No more to chiefs and ladies bright  
The harp of Tara swells:  
The chord alone, that breaks at night,  
Its tale of ruin tells.  
Thus Freedom now so seldom wakes,  
The only throb she gives  
Is when some heart indignant breaks,  
To show that still she lives.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION



IRELAND contains a great many stone crosses, many of them are beautifully carved. Every illustration that will be used in succeeding instalments of this article has been studied from the original and lithographed by myself. All the subjects are drawn to scale, and there are about forty incient Irish inscriptions, of which fac-similes will be given. There are thirty-six prints.

The carvings on the sculptured crosses are often much injured. With respect to the figure subjects, not a line which is not in the originals is represented. A thorough acquaintance with ancient Irish ornament, as it exists in stone, metal and manuscript, has enabled me to unravel a complex design, which, from being injured, would, to a tyro, be inextricable confusion. The principle on which almost all ornament is founded, that of regular recurrence, aided me. I have added, in a few instances, parts which are gone in the originals; this has been done only when the additions were necessary, and I was fully confident of being right.

The little that has been done by Irish writers about these crosses were better undone. Ledwich published two views of two crosses at Clonmacnoise. They are erroneous, are stated to be of one cross, and the text is as absurd as the delineations. Dr.

Petrie has represented part of the base of the Tuam Cross. He describes the base as being double its actual height; he erroneously asserts that there were crutches or props under the arms of the cross, and that its entire height—error of the base's height included—was only thirteen feet eight inches, it having been above thirty feet high. Archdall, in his *Monasticon Hibernicon*, says of the North Cross, Clonmacnoise, that on it "are some rude carvings and an inscription in an antique and unknown character," and that the carvings on the noble cross in the southeast angle of the churchyard at Monasterboice "show the uncivilized age in which they were executed," the letters being very plain and the crosses the finest monuments in Europe of the early Christian ages. Such are some of the errors. I do not know that one who has preceded me notices the great artistic merits of these noble works.

### Characteristic of Irish Style.

In all the remains of ancient Irish art there is a peculiar style, as truly national as that of Greece, of Assyria, or Egypt, or any other country that has been distinguished in art. The characteristic of this Irish style is interlaced ornaments; bands, cords, serpents, dogs, birds, even human beings, are interlaced. There are also other modes; spirals, waves, zigzags, frets, etc. Vegetable forms are very rare. These ornaments display wonderful powers of invention and execution, and entitle the ancient Irish to rank as the greatest masters of ornamental art that ever existed. In this opinion I possibly stand

alone, but an attentive study of the ornaments of every age and country has led me to this conclusion.

Art flourished in Ireland apparently from a long time before the Christian era, and did not cease till about A. D. 1460. The Irish annals show that the precious metals were worked with skill in Ireland nearly four thousand years ago, and thence we get occasional notices of Irish art, literature and civilization, till the Anglo-Norman invasion, A. D. 1172. Most of these notices are to be found in the four masters, and are briefly as follows:—B. C. 1897, King Nuadhat lost his hand in battle at Ballysadare, County Sligo, and a silver hand was made for him. B. C. 1620, Irish gold and silver were wrought into goblets, brooches, etc., and a sumptuary, or class-law, was passed respecting the number of colors to be worn by various classes. B. C. 1389, silver shields were manufactured in the County Kilkenny. B. C. 1328, chains and rings of gold and silver worn. B. C. 1278, a triennial parliament established at Tara, County Meath. A. D. 266, King Cormac is mentioned as being a very literary character. The next notice that I shall refer to is the arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland, A. D. 435. Some think that then the arts, literature, Christianity and civilization were introduced, an opinion that seems to be erroneous. Toland says that St. Patrick burnt some hundreds of Irish books, and Jocelyn that he overturned some dozens of gold and silver idols. Toland may be right, but the Monk of Furness has written the Irish apostle's life with so little regard for truth that I must suspect any statement made

by him. The secretary and chaplain of Henry II, Giraldus Cambrensis, has, in his topography of Ireland, described an Irish manuscript which he saw at Kildare, and was assigned to St. Patrick's time. The Welchman's description of the illuminations are clear, characteristic, and enthusiastically eulogistic. Many Englishmen, in our own days, have been nearly as warm as G. Cambrensis in their praises of ancient Irish art. But a better proof of the excellence of ancient Irish art exists in the many works which yet remain. In manuscripts we have the Book of Kells, assigned to the sixth century, and the Book of Durrow, of the same period; both are in Trinity College, Dublin. The Book of Dimma and Gospels of St. Chad, seventh century. Book of Durham, to beginning of eighth century. Psalter of St. John's College, Cambridge, the ninth century. The Books of Armagh and of McRegal to the early part of the ninth century; the Gospels of McDurnan to the tenth century, and so on to the Book of Ballymote and other illuminated manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, and which bring us to A. D. 1460. The dates are given on the best authorities I could get; several are from the *Palaeographia Sacra Pictoria* of J. O. Westwood, Esq.

The dates of only two of the sculptured crosses appear to be determined with anything like certainty. Dr. Petrie assigns the Tuam Cross to about 1125, and the North Cross, at Clonmacnoise, to some two centuries earlier. The learned doctor concludes that the two noble Crosses at Monaster-

boice belong to the tenth century; his reasons are too feeble to satisfy anyone.

The remains of metal work are numerous and superlatively excellent, but only a few dates have been determined. The Shrine of St. Patrick's bell belongs probably to the end of the eleventh century, and the Cross of Cong to the earlier part of the twelfth century.

Availing ourselves of the few dates here given, and carefully examining the relative merits of the various remains, we find that in proportion as the work is ancient, so it is also excellent. Judging by G. Cambrensis' clear description, the Book of Kildare excelled the Book of Kells, and J. O. Westwood declares the Book of Kells to be "the most elaborately executed monument of early Christian Art in existence." It is certainly a matchless work.

#### Irish Art Reflects Ancient Glory.

Irish art continued good up to the twelfth century, thence it rapidly deteriorated, and became extinct about the fifteenth century. But who can think that a nation that worked in silver four thousand years ago; that had a parliament five centuries before the foundation of Rome, or the institution, by Lycurgus, of the Spartan commonwealth; that was never invaded by Rome; that conquered the Danes at the very time that Canute the Dane ascended the English throne; and a section of which maintained successfully, for many years, a war against all the power of Queen Elizabeth; who that knows what Ireland was formerly but must see

how probable it is that ancient Ireland excelled in art? I see no reason for supposing that the Irish Apostle did anything to civilize Ireland. The style of Irish art shows that it did not come from Rome. The excellence assigned to the Book of Kildare, and displayed in the Book of Kells and other Irish art works, shows that the style must have been cultivated for ages before it could have been brought to such perfection. To judge this matter rightly we must examine the colors and the vellum of manuscripts; we must consider how excellent must have been the knives, the pens, the brushes, and the compasses which were used in making the illuminations; how complete were the arrangements for producing such amazingly laborious works. Above all, what a length of time would be required in order to systematize the style, and complete the arrangements necessary for giving it a thorough realization. Remembering all these, and also bearing in mind how numerous are the remains; that they are found in Continental libraries, as well as in those of the British Islands, in great numbers; that they are incomparably the most exquisite specimens of ancient illumination in the Royal Library at Paris, in the British Museum, in Trinity College, and other great collections; that, in fact, they are unapproachable, and probably were never approached as a thorough development of sound ornamental art, as a display of harmony and beauty in composition and coloring, combined with an almost superhuman delicacy and completeness in execution—remembering these



facts, I cannot think that the art began in the fifth century and attained perfection at its birth.

### The Irish Stone Workers.

What I have said respecting the ancient Irish manuscript illuminations I would extend to the works in stone and metal. The excellence, the amazing laboriousness and perfection of these works of art, indicate a very long and a very patient cultivation. The style of all is the same—unmistakably Irish. It could not have come from Rome, as Rome never had it. It originated in Ireland, and extended thence to Great Britain and the Continent of Europe.

The idea that the Irish style originated in heathen times serves to explain the frequent occurrence of the serpent representations. No worship was more general than that of the serpent; we find it constantly represented in Egyptian, Grecian and Hindoo art, as a religious symbol. It has even been placed among the stars, and the serpent and the serpent-bearer, as Draco, Hydra and Ophiuchus, are probably but religious symbols, applied to astronomical uses. The conquest which the Irish apostle of Christianity is said to have gained over the serpents of Ireland has been doubted, but if it was meant that he gained a victory over the serpent worship, the story seems entitled to credit. Then it may be asked, Why was the serpent representation continued in Christian works? I answer, look to early Christian art in Italy. Notwithstanding the general opposition of the early Christians

to any use of art, an opposition so determined that artists were obliged to relinquish their abhorred craft before they would be admitted into the Christian community, yet we find that the strong habit of art not only survived this opposition, but that Apolloes, Orpheuses and other heathen themes were used to express ideas connected with the new faith; and not only has the heathen style of art survived to our own days, but a large amount of its ideas are being reproduced among us for our Christian use. And the more we become acquainted with heathen ideas, the more we find our art, our literature, nay, even our religion, affected by its influence. I think that ancient Irish art was pagan, and was continued during the Christian period, just as the peculiar form of the Irish cross is pagan, or as the names of the months, or of the days of the week, are pagan; these, and a great deal more of paganism, having continued, owing to the tenacity with which a people retain their general habits and ideas.

Serious attempts have been made to show that the Irish crosses were not executed by Irish artists.

J. D. Chambers, Esq., M. A., treasurer to the Ecclesiological Society, read a paper before that society on the 7th June, 1848, in which he maintains that either the best of the Irish crosses were imported from the south of Europe (Italy?), or that Italian artists were sent over to Ireland. This opinion of the learned treasurer might be thought by some to be a compliment to Ireland, which it is not, as the ancient Irish artists excelled those of Italy of

the early Christian ages. It is very weakly advocated, and opposed to fact; for

The Materials of the Crosses are . . .	Irish
The style of the carvings is . . .	Irish
The inscriptions on them are . . .	Irish
They are of the same style as the ancient grave-stones, which are . . .	Irish
As the matchless Works in metal, which are . . .	Irish
As the Illuminated manuscripts, which are . . .	Irish

The style is quite different from any known Italian style, and ancient Ireland did not want to import crosses or carvers from Italy, as she had better artists at home.

I think the crosses were intended to be colored, but no color has been discovered on them. A moist climate, favorable to the growth of moss and lichens, and centuries of exposure and neglect, would be sufficient to destroy color if it were ever on them. But the use of color on sculpture appears to have been universal previous to the agitated period of the sixteenth century, when all Europe lost sight of much that was elegant in art; one can hardly suppose that the ancient Irish were an exception to every other people; but even granting that other nations did not color their sculptures, the Irish may have done so; none have shown a more delicate and profound knowledge of color than they; their Book of Kells is matchless in that respect; and their metal works display the love of color in-

dulged in a most masterly way; but sculptured works, particularly the Irish crosses, are much better calculated for a display of color than either metal or manuscript, and I can hardly suppose that they who showed so keen a sense of the charms of color in these two modes, would have neglected the better opportunity for its indulgence which is afforded by sculpture, and especially the kind of sculpture they produced—so full of ornament—which is all but senseless without the life which color imparts. Besides, the carvings are in some instances in very low relief—this is particularly the case with the Cross of Tuam—and the ornaments are very intricate, and sometimes very high up; other carvings are so placed that very little light can get to them, as under the cross-arms and on the lower rims of the curves. In these places colors would be required to render the patterns visible.

These considerations are, I think, of weight, but a more direct proof is that so many of the interlaced ornaments are composed of more than one band, and the bands are arranged symmetrically; but this symmetry of composition cannot be seen without the aid of color. I cannot think that the artists made such designs without intending them to be elucidated by color.

In making every study with the utmost care from the originals, drawing every subject to scale, and executing the lithographs myself, I have done my best to insure accuracy. The subject of the Irish crosses and of ancient Irish art are new, and I have had the aid from others. Hence, not only the rep-

representations which I give, but the opinions I maintain, are original. These opinions are, that ancient Irish art originated in heathen times; that it was the most masterly development of ornamental art the world has ever seen; and that in applying the style to sculpture the Irish artists made color an essential portion of their designs. These opinions will be taken for whatever they are found to be worth; my hope is that in my endeavor to make known the excellency of ancient Irish art, and the noble sculptured crosses of Ireland, I may be the means of adding to the store of human knowledge, and enlarging the circle of refined enjoyment; and especially, by giving proofs that my native land was anciently the most civilized in Europe, create an interest in a fine country and a gifted people, who still retain evidence that they were once

“Great, glorious, and free”;

that Ireland was “the emerald gem of the western world,” not alone because of her verdant soil, but because she had an advanced civilization when the rest of Europe was sunk in barbarism. In the scientific, literary, and artistic excellence of her sons Ireland finds a proud and worthy delight, and in her art works of by-gone times she possesses unquestionable proofs of the unrivalled skill of her ancient artists. Of these proofs her sculptured crosses form an important part; the illustrations given of these beautiful monuments, will, I trust, be satisfactory evidence that the high rank I claim for the ancient Irish artists is their undoubted right.

## CHAPTER II

### MONASTERBOICE CROSSES

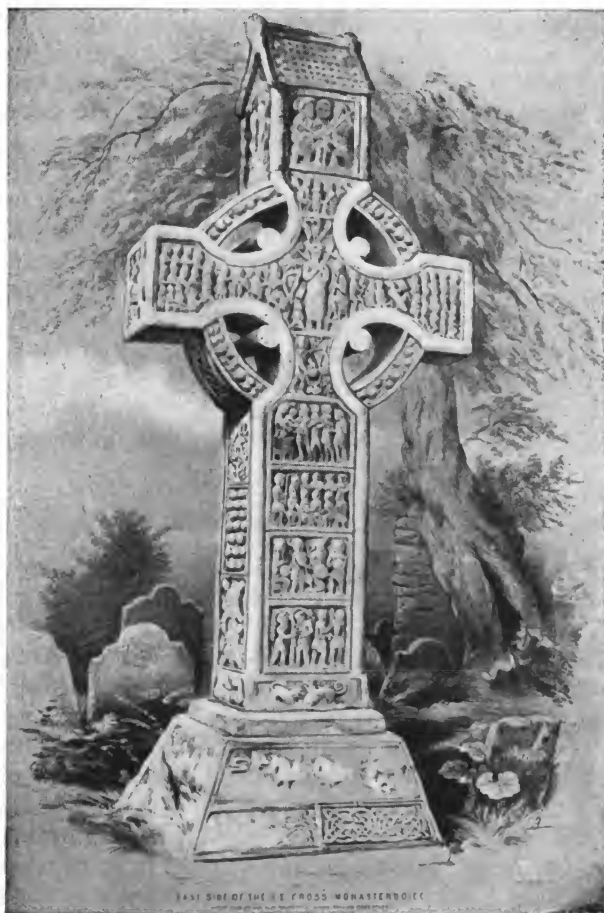
AT about thirty-four miles from Dublin, in the County Louth, and some four miles from Drogheda, in a district of low hills, are situated the ruins of two ancient churches, a pillar tower, and three very large crosses, two of which are in good preservation. One is twenty, the other twenty-three feet high; and both are covered to profusion with elaborate carvings, one of them having also an inscription. The third is broken, and almost devoid of ornament. As these three crosses are situated west, southeast and northeast to each other, they will be distinguished by their position in these respects. The material is a white silicious stone, close-grained, not unlike statuary marble, the quantity of quartz giving it a crystalline appearance.

#### East Side of the S. E. Cross Monasterboice.

On the east side of the base there are two cavaliers, and some large animal, possibly a lion, with a poetic length of tail; beneath are two panels of interlaced tracery; one can still be made out, the other not. The first panel on the shaft contains the Fall, and Cain and Abel. The subjects of the second and third panels are not yet solved. The fourth one is most probably the visit of the three Magii; Joseph appears about to receive the Divine Infant, for the purpose of

showing him to the Wise Men; above the child's head is the star. Next over that panel is St. Michael, "the Lord of Souls," weighing a human spirit, while the Evil One, though prostrated by his great conquerer, endeavors to reverse the favorable result by fraudulently pulling down the opposite scale.

In the centre of the cross is the Last Judgment; Christ appears with his proper attributes, the cross and the sceptre; the Holy Spirit is seen above His head, under the emblem of a dove; angels harp and play other musical instruments around him; to His right hand are the blessed spirits, on the other we see the Prince of Darkness, armed with a trident, and aided by his ministers, urging away the condemned. One of his angels, who is seen kicking the sinners before him, carries what appears to be a book. Is it a list of the sins of those wretches kept by this clerk of the lower regions to be produced against them on that occasion? A very small figure will be observed kneeling at the left side and close to Christ, and over that figure a book open. Is that a soul undergoing the final sentence, and is the book a record of his good deeds? Or is it the patron or person at whose cost the cross was executed? To introduce the patron of such a work in this way was sometimes done in early art. Above the dove appear to be two angels guarding a child, and at the top are two larger-sized figures; one carries a pastoral staff, the other has also a staff or sword. Between the heads of these figures is a cross in a circle. The ring is ornamented with spirals and serpents—an ornament very usual on Irish crosses; the spirals are on hemispherical bosses.



EAST SIDE OF THE SOUTHEAST CROSS, MONASTERBOICE,  
COUNTY LOUTH.



This cross is altogether seventeen feet high. The cross arms are seven feet wide, and the shaft is two feet three inches wide at the base. This cross is composed of three stones; first, the base; the second reaches from thence to the top of the circle; and the third one completes the monument.

Between Satan and his head clerk there is a curious figure, naked, kneeling, and with its face apparently towards you. What can it be? Not a condemned soul surely; the imp of evil who holds the book would hardly be so negligent as to leave one behind him. It has been suggested that this may be a "Shelah-nagig," a class of female carved human figures pretty general in Ireland, found about old churches and castles, and which are so indelicate that no description of them can be given.

The Southeast Cross, Monasterboice (West Side.)

The inscription is "Or do Muiredach las in dernad in Chrossa." "A prayer for Murdoch, by whom was made this cross."

Dr. Petrie, in his work on the Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, expresses an opinion that "Muiredach, son of Domhall, tanist, Abbot of Armagh, and chief steward of the southern O'Neill, and successor of Buite, the son of Bronach head council of all the men of Bregia," was "likely to have been the erector of the crosses at Monasterboice and their contemporaneous Round Tower." This opinion is founded on the circumstance of two Murdochs being mentioned in the Annals of Ulster as having been Abbots of Monasterboice, one of whom died A. D. 844, the other A.



EAST SIDE OF THE WEST CROSS, MONASTERBOICE,  
COUNTY LOUTH.

D. 923 or 24. To this second one the doctor ascribes the erection of the crosses and tower, "because he was a man of much greater distinction, and probably wealth," than the other Abbot. As Murdoch is not an unusual name in the Green Island, there seems no reason for assuming that the crosses must have been erected by Abbots of Monasterboice, and that the same person must have erected all the crosses there and the pillar tower also; neither is any reason assigned for the assertion that the tower is contemporaneous with the three crosses. The other erections have no inscriptions.

The Crucifixion has the usual accessories of the sponge and spear-bearers; there are also supporting angels at the head of Christ. Above and below Christ are serpents, whirling from ornamental bosses, and to the right and left are bosses with serpents indicated conventionally. The three groups on the shaft of the cross, and the fourth one over the Crucifixion, seem to refer to one story; in the lowest group an ecclesiastic is attacked by two armed men; in the next, these men have become students or ecclesiastics; in the third, the ecclesiastic resigns his staff to one and his book to the other—the Spirit of God is seen descending on this latter; and in the upper group the two men have become ecclesiastics, and are aiding in raising the centre figure to Heaven. I do not know what to make of the groups at each side of the Crucifixion. The patterns on the ring are serpents, with one limb from each animal thrown out for the purpose of making a plat-work pattern. The scale is one-twelfth.

Details of the Southeast Cross, Monasterboice.

In the central row we have, below, the carvings of the bottom of the shaft, on the south and north sides; next are the rims of the ring; and at the top is the carving under the northern cross-arm. The corresponding carving on the south is two dogs laid head and tail.

The left-hand row represents, first, the south side of the shaft; this is divided into three panels; the lowest panel consists of eight human figures platted together; the next panel is serpents grouped in whirls, the whirls being on raised bosses; and the upper panel has a tree in bowers, with animals.

The next subject is the end of the southern cross-arm; it represents Pilate washing his hands, a servant pours water from a vessel shaped like a horn; similar shaped vessels are represented on the walls of Pompeii—guards, armed with swords and shields, are in the rear. The top subject is supposed to be Christ's entry into Jerusalem; angels attend; over all is an ornament of serpents and bosses.

On the right side of the print below is represented the north side of the shaft, which is ornamented with three panels of interlacing, of beautiful design; in the middle is the end of the north cross-arm, containing the mocking of Christ, with angels attending. The top subject is two figures with pastoral staves, and a dove between them—a subject of frequent occurrence on Irish crosses; over these figures is an ornament of serpents and bosses. The scale is one-eighth.

East Side of the West Cross, Monasterboice.

This cross is of white silicious sandstone, and is



WEST SIDE OF THE SOUTHEAST CROSS, MONASTERBOICE,  
COUNTY LOUTH.



WEST SIDE OF THE WEST CROSS, MONASTERBOICE,  
COUNTY LOUTH,

more than twenty-three feet high. The base was never finished. The lower part of the shaft has evidently suffered violence, which tradition attributes to "The Bigots of the Iron Time," as Sir W. Scott styles Cromwell's iconoclastic zealots.

The subject on the lower part of the shaft is David overcoming the lion, the lamb and crook indicate his pastoral occupation. Next is Abraham's sacrifice, Isaac is chopping the wood, the ram and the angel are seen in the right-hand corner. Third panel seems to be Samuel selecting David; fourth panel, Samuel anointing David, an attendant carries the head of Goliath; fifth panel (?); sixth panel, a chariot, with the driver and person driven; the wheels are very high; seventh panel, an interlaced ornament; eighth panel, the three children in the fiery furnace. There are two other divisions of ornament below the carvings in the centre of the cross, which may represent Christ come in glory, but is very much damaged. There are bosses and spiral ornaments on each cross-arm, and above as well as below the centre carving. The subjects of the groups of figures on the cross-arms and on the upper arm are beyond my power to determine. The carvings on the ring seem to be interlaced bands. They are very much injured.

An ancient grave slab, with an inscription, is at the north side of the churchyard; I have represented it in this print. The inscription is generally read OR DU RUARCAN. A doubt may naturally arise whether the eighth letter is an R or an N; the two previous R's are of a different form, yet I have seen many R's like the letter referred to. The U for an O at the fourth letter is singular. Scale, one-sixteenth.

The West Side of the West Cross, Monasterboice.

The first panel on the lower part is greatly injured, it represents the soldiers guarding Christ's sepulchre, as will be better understood by referring to the north cross at Clonmacnoise, and the cross in the street of Kells. The second panel is understood to represent Christ's baptism, with the Holy Ghost descending, in what imagination may conceive to be the likeness of a dove. The four succeeding panels are supposed to represent the Transfiguration, seizing, *Ecce homo!* etc., of Christ. In the centre of the cross is Christ crucified, with the sponge and the spear bearers. Two men support a rest under the feet of Christ. The carvings on the cross-arms and the upper arm are more than I can solve. Scale, one-sixteenth.

#### Details of Crosses.

A (referring to the illustration marked "Details of Crosses") represents the south and B the north side of the west cross at Monasterboice. Panels of bossed, whirled and interlaced serpents; of interlaced dogs; of zig-zag and bossed whirls, and of interlaced bands, are seen to alternate with panels containing human and other figures, the import of which may be made out by some one more successful than I have been at these enigmas. At C is represented an ornament seen near the top of the north side of the shaft. D represents the south side of the top arm. The north side is very like the south one. E and F are the ends of the cross arms, and G is the rim of one of the lower curves, both being very like each other; the upper rims are without ornament. H and I are the carvings in the





DETAILS OF CROSSES. THE LETTERS USED IN THE TEXT REFER TO THIS ILLUSTRATION AS FOLLOWS: A IS THE COLUMN ON THE LEFT; B, THE COLUMN ON THE RIGHT; READING FROM TOP TO BOTTOM THE LEFT ROW OF ORNAMENTS ARE O. M. E. K.; THE MIDDLE ROW, H. D. L. G. I.; THE RIGHT ROW, P. N. F. C.



ILLUSTRATION OF ORNAMENTS ON IRISH CROSSES. THIS IS INTRODUCED FOR THE PURPOSE OF SHOWING THE SEVERAL BANDS OF WHICH THE INTERLACED ORNAMENTS ARE COMPOSED.



DETAILS OF THE SOUTHEAST CROSS, MONASTERBOICE,  
COUNTY LOUTH.

centre of both sides of the third cross at Monasterboice; this is of white silicious sandstone; it is very much broken, but I guess it to have been originally about sixteen feet high, the subjects given are the only sculptures on the cross, which is of very fine proportions, and there seems to be as much remaining as would enable the restoration of this monument to be accomplished. I hope it may be done. The subject of one is the Crucifixion, with the sponge and the spear bearers. The other is the C pattern within a circle. K is an ornament from a side of the shaft of a cross at Armagh; which lies broken, and greatly injured, among a quantity of rubbishy stones in the churchyard belonging to the Cathedral. L represents a carving of the C pattern, within a circle, from a cross in the island at Tynan Abbey, County Armagh. M and N represent the shaft of a dilapidated cross near the church, and O and P are two ornaments from a cross standing in the street at Tynan. Material silicious sandstone. Scale one-twelfth, with the exception of C and K; these two are on a scale of one-sixth.

## CHAPTER III

### KILLAMERY AND DUNNAMAGGAN CROSSES

#### Killamery Cross.

A FEW houses of humble pretensions, about twelve miles from Kilkenny, on the road to Clonmel, constitute the village of Killamery. High and well-wooded hills (pre-eminent among which is the beautiful mountain Slievnamon) and a vast expanse of fertile plains, give to the locality of this village a picturesque interest. Here, on a small, rugged eminence, is the churchyard of Killamery, with its low and broken walls, crowded tombstones, and hoary thorns; and, above all, an ancient cross, remarkable alike for its singularity and its beauty, and which is, fortunately, in excellent preservation, notwithstanding the many ages it has stood exposed to the elements in this wild mountain solitude.

The cross is composed of three parts; the base, which is about twenty-six inches high; thence to the cap is eight feet four inches; and, lastly, the cap is about fifteen inches high; hence the cross altogether is about twelve feet in height.

The arms extend to three feet ten inches, and the circle is three feet in diameter.

The shaft of the cross, measured below, is one foot six inches wide in front, and fourteen inches on the side; but at the top, immediately under the

cap, it is only twelve inches wide in front, and nine inches at the side.

The cap is retained in its place by a rectangular mortice, which receives a tenon projecting from the upper arm of the cross.

The material is a close-grained whitish sandstone.

The ornaments on the east side of the cross are in very good preservation, but those on the west side are very difficult to ascertain. I have represented the upper arm as well as I could make it out. The figures on the cross-arms are introduced from a sketch obligingly furnished by the Rev. J. Graves, of Kilkenny, and are, I feel assured, very faithful. The remaining portion of the decorations, viz., the fantastic zig-zag and the diaper ornaments, are represented with a most minute accuracy as they are in the original. The boss on the east side is semi-globular; that on the west side is nearly flat, not rising above half an inch.

There are ornaments on the sides which could not be shown in the two views given, but will be given in another print, so as to complete the representation of this monument.

The incised slab is in the same churchyard though not exactly in the place in which it is represented. It is a rough block of coarse argillaceous, slaty, brown stone; the incised cross and inscription are cut roughly and rather shallow. There are two inscriptions in Irish, "Or ar anmain na Edain," and "Or ar anmin na Edaen." They signify, "A Prayer for the soul of Edain" and



WEST SIDE OF KILLAMERY CROSS.



**EAST SIDE OF KILLAMERY CROSS.**





WEST SIDE OF DUNNAMAGGAN CROSS.



EAST SIDE OF DUNNAMAGGAN CROSS.

"Edaen" respectively: possibly man and wife. The slab is about five feet long and six inches thick.

There is also represented what appears to be a base of a cross. Whatever it may have been intended for, the form is very singular. It lies immediately outside the south wall of the graveyard, by a splashy spring. Until lately, the hollow in it was used by the devotees of the place as a receptacle for pins deposited there during the performance of some mystic devotions!

The scale used is an inch to the foot.

Killamery contains no remains of ancient buildings, though doubtless there was a church there formerly. Seward states, in his "Topographical Dictionary," that St. Gobhan presided there over a thousand monks! So large a community would require a very extensive range of buildings for its accommodation, but all traces of them are gone.

#### Dunnamaggan Cross.

This cross is in a small burial ground, a couple of miles from Kells, County Kilkenny. It is unfortunately broken into several pieces, which lie scattered about. I have deemed it better to represent it unbroken, as all the fragments are still in the graveyard.

As the drawing is on a scale of an inch to the foot, the dimensions of the original can be easily known. It consists of two parts—the base and the supported portion. The base is about a foot and a half high, and is in a very rough, perhaps time-worn state. The part above the base is fully seven

feet high; the entire cross being eight and a half feet in height. The thickness of the upper stone is about eight inches. There are four figures, in as many niches, on the shaft. These figures are of different heights; the tallest, which seems to be the figure of a bishop, is twenty-six inches high; the one on the east face is only twenty-one inches in height; and the two remaining are still smaller. The figures do not rise beyond the general surface; their rather bold relief is caused by the niches being carved deeply.

The circular part is thirty-two inches in diameter; there is no indication of any tenon for a cap on the upper arm.

The opes are of unequal size, and the whole execution rude. The material is a sandstone grit.

The ruins of a very dilapidated old church are close to the cross.

## CHAPTER IV

### KILKLISPEEN CROSSES

THE burying ground of Kilklispeen lies between Scoughbridge and the slate quarries, in the County Kilkenny; it is in a large grass field, and without any enclosing fence. Amid the thickly-grouped tombstones, and situated north and south of each other, are two richly-carved crosses, and tradition states that there has been a third. Embosomed among high hills, with a picturesque valley and stream, and bold cliffs adjoining, the locality of this wild mountain graveyard possesses a good deal of scenic beauty.

#### The South Cross, Kilklispeen.

This cross consists of three separate portions. The base is one foot nine inches high, thence to the cap is eight feet four. The cap had been removed some years ago, and reduced to its present small dimensions, but originally it, doubtless, was a high cone, similar to the North Cross, and in all probability at the least eighteen inches high, which would make the entire height of the cross nearly twelve feet. The arms are four and a half feet across; the diameter of the circle is four inches less. The shaft, measured below, is nineteen inches wide in front, and sixteen at the side.

Though time has wrought much damage to this

noble cross, yet the bold style of ornaments renders them visible enough, with the exception of certain carvings on the base, apparently of animals, which are very difficult to make out.

The circular parts of the ornament on the west side of the shaft are sunk below the general surface. The ornaments at the sides and other parts, which cannot be shown properly in the two views given, are of considerable interest, and will be represented in another plate.

The bosses on the east side do not rise more than a couple of inches. There is a ring and some sort of pattern, now nearly obliterated, on the face of each of them. Those on the west side are high cones, with the exception of the centre one, which is truncated. These are without any pattern.

The cross is well carved in sandstone grit.

These two drawings are on a scale of one twelfth.

#### The North Cross.

This very fine specimen of Celtic ornamental carving has, unfortunately, been wantonly injured; one of the curves, and a great part of the bold moulding which ornamented the shaft, are gone. These injuries, without doubt, have been produced by the evil spirit of wanton destructiveness. The influence of many centuries' exposure to the atmosphere is also plainly visible; still, what remains shows that this is the ruin of one of the most beautiful crosses in Ireland, rich as that country undoubtedly is in these monuments.



WEST SIDE OF SOUTH CROSS.



EAST SIDE OF SOUTH CROSS.



This cross is in three separate parts, namely, the base, the cap, and the part between these. It is altogether above twelve feet in height. As the scale is the same as has been used for the previous ones—namely, an inch to the foot—it seems unnecessary to enter into details.

The cap was removed some years ago, as had occurred with the cap of the South cross; but a priest of the locality had the kindness to search out both the caps and cause their being restored to their proper places.

The removal of the caps having left the tops of the upper arms exposed to the weather, those parts have suffered in consequence, as may be seen in the prints. The cap of the North cross does not seem to have been altered in any way; its strange form is doubtless original; a fact which receives strong corroboration in the Kilkeeran crosses (a place within a couple of miles of Kilklispeen), where there are three crosses, two of which have caps of the same shape as the one on the North cross of Kilklispeen. The third cross at Kilkeeran has lost its cap.

Both the crosses at Kilklispeen are profusely ornamented with an interwoven or platted pattern; but they differ in this respect—the plat of the South cross being flat or ribbon-like, with a score in the centre; while that of the North cross is a half-round, with the spaces between very deeply cut. The bosses on the east side of this cross are ornamented on their sides with a plat-work pattern; they are truncated.

Near the bottom of the shaft a curious diaper-like

decoration is seen, which has often been mistaken for an inscription. The print shows it correctly.

On the horizontal part of the base (beneath the Boucher Knot ornament) there is a pattern, which is indicated in the print. It consists of small squares, sunk somewhat deeply, and which, by being kept in line, form a sort of checker ornament.

The cross is well carved; the material, as usual, a sandstone grit.

As the pronunciation of Irish names of places often puzzles strangers, it may be well to mention that Killamery has the a as in able; Dun-na-maggan has the accent on the first g; Kilklispeen, Kilkeeran have the accent on the ee, which are pronounced long, as in seen. Scough is pronounced as the Scotch pronounce Lough, with a full guttural sound.

#### West Side of the North Cross.

On the base are seven human figures, generally said to represent so many bishops, and whence, together with the curious funeral procession on one of the ends of the base, has very probably been derived the first idea of a strange story about seven boys born at a birth, who became bishops, and were all beheaded by a certain Countess of Granna. The legend may be had in full from any of the numerous relators of such vestiges of history belonging to the locality, who will doubtless give certain curious particulars which cannot be properly mentioned here. An examination of the figures will show that there are but six who carry the "bacal;" the centre one being without the pastoral staff. This personage's



WEST SIDE OF NORTH CROSS.



EAST SIDE OF NORTH CROSS.

headdress is also differently shaped; perhaps he wears a crown; at all events, he appears to be addressing instructions to the six, to which they listen attentively.

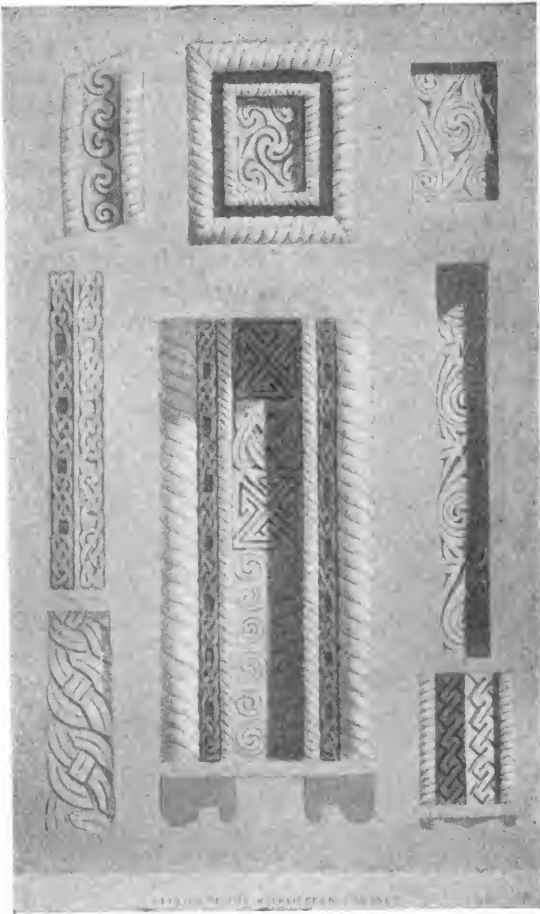
It is hardly necessary to direct attention to the richness of the carvings shown in this view of the cross. The spiral involutions, richly-carved bosses, etc., are, even in their present almost ruined state, beautiful examples of Irish decorative art. The group of four human figures platted together is very singular, but not altogether unique. The Cross of Bangher has a similar group. That which stands in the market-place of Kells, county Meath, has three human beings similarly interlaced; and one of the Monasterboice crosses has a carving composed of eight men elaborately intertwined.

The circle of this Kilkispeen cross is four feet in diameter; width at the cross arms, four feet seven inches. Scale, one-twelfth.

#### Details of the Kilkispeen Crosses.

In this print the ornaments are represented, not as they now appear, but as they may have been when newly executed.

There are sections given to show more clearly how far the various parts of these decorations are relieved. For instance, the rope moulding projects nearly four inches from the central panel. The corresponding panel on the opposite or north side of that same cross is exactly similar in style to the one represented; there are, however, considerable differences in the details. The ornament corresponds in



DETAILS OF THE KILKLISPEEN CROSSES.

position to the central panel last referred to. There are also simliar double bands of boldly projecting rope moulding on each side, as are shown in the shaft of the South Cross; but in the North one there is no ornament in the space between the double rope mouldings. As the ends of the cross arms in both these Crosses resemble each other in having double rope mouldings, only the central panel has been given. The rim is represented as if it were straightened. There is a rope moulding on each side of this chain plat, which is so like the one represented that it was not deemed necessary to introduce it, and doing so would overcrowd the print.

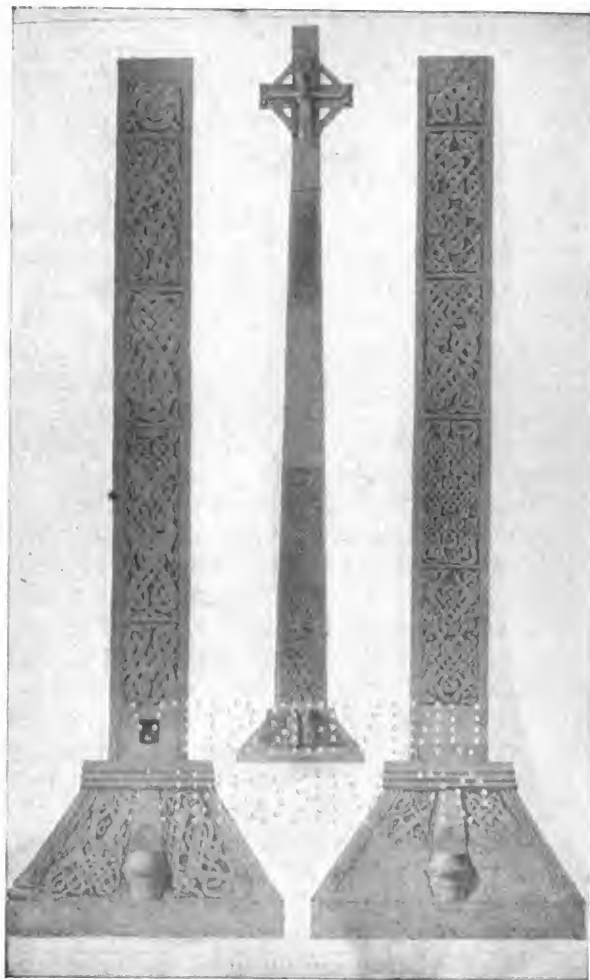
## CHAPTER V

### TUAM CROSS

ABOUT thirty years ago the base of this cross was found, buried under rubbish, in the marketplace of Tuam, a town in the County of Galway; other portions have been discovered since, but some are lost. Those which have been found were arranged at the Dublin Industrial Exhibition as shown in the sketch. The great height and slender proportions of this monument have caused doubts as to whether the parts we have belong to the same cross, or, even if they do, whether the arrangement of them was quite right. Let us determine whether these doubts are well founded. So very tall and slender a cross is unique in Ireland; there is one at Kilkieran, in the county Kilkenny, of the same proportions, but it is only thirteen feet high, and the shaft consists of a single stone; while the Tuam one was originally above thirty feet high, and consisted of eight stones, including the base; nevertheless, such care appears to have been taken to give stability to it that it must originally have been a very firm erection.

The lower stone of the shaft has a tenon, measuring a foot square, which fits exactly into a mortice hole at the top of the base; the shaft is two feet three inches broad, and a little more than a foot thick, measured at the base, and the base corresponds so





TUAM CROSS (A).



TUAM CROSS (B).

exactly to these measures that it projects about four inches all round beyond the shaft. There can be no doubt, then, that the first stone of the shaft is rightly placed; neither can there be any doubt respecting the next stone, for besides that it agrees in size with the one beneath, the patterns on the four sides run into each other over the joint, and settle the question. But between the second and the third stones there is a blank of nearly seven feet; for this reason—on looking at the broad sides of the shaft, it will be observed that they are bounded by straight lines, which incline towards each other, so as to narrow the shaft at the rate of about three inches to every five feet of rise, and also that these broad sides have moulded bands, three inches wide, at their borders. The third stone has the same characteristics—namely, the straight outlines, inclined at the same rate, and the three-inch bands at the borders; but it is so much smaller, that, in order to give it a proper place, the blank had to be left between this stone and the second one. The head of the cross corresponds in measure with the top of the shaft. As the lower part of the Christ is gone, a second blank occurs here, and from the figures above the Christ being incomplete, as well as by the tenon at the top, we know that the topmost stone is required to complete the cross.

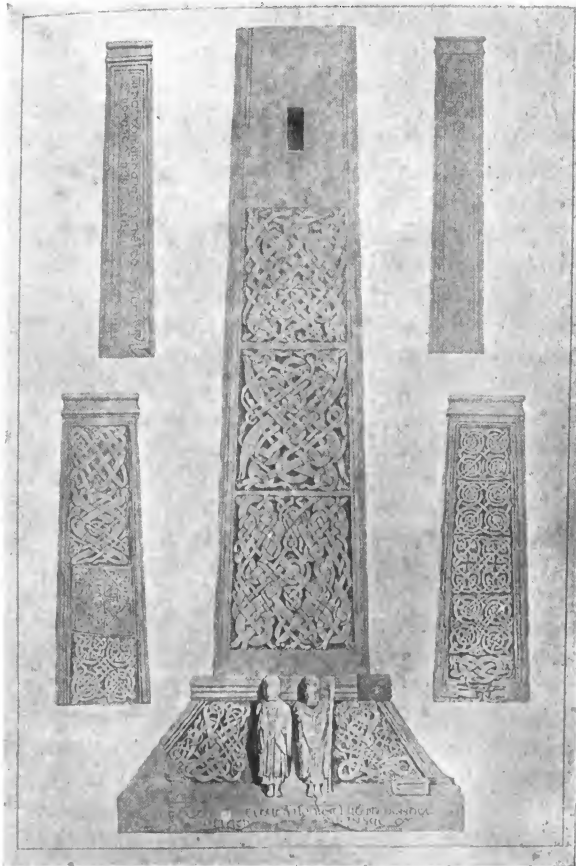
There are four inscriptions on the Tuam Cross; two are on the base, and the other two on the third stone of the shaft, and there is such a perfect correspondence between these four inscriptions as shows that both stones are part of the same cross. The

inscriptions on the base are: "Or do Thoirdeibuch U'Choncubuir, don Dabbaid Jarlath, las in dernad insae Chrossa." "A prayer for Turloch O'Conor, for the Abbot of Jarlath, by whom was made this Cross."—"Or do U'Ossin, don Dabbaid las in dernad." "A Prayer for O'Ossin, for the Abbot by whom it was made." The inscriptions on the third stone of the shaft are: "Or don Rig, don Thoirdeibuch U'Chonchubuir. Or don Chaer, do Gilli Ch. Ush..Tho"... "A prayer for the King, for Turloch O'Conor. A prayer for the Artist, for the servant of Christ. Uch... Tho"...—"Or do Chomarba Jarlath, do Aed U'Ossin las in dernad in Chrossa." "A prayer for the successor of Jarlath, for Aed O'Ossin, by whom was made this Cross."

In these inscriptions the name of Turloch O'Conor occurs both on the base and the shaft, and in one of them he is styled King. The name of O'Ossin is also on both stones. He is stated to be the maker of the cross in two of the inscriptions; and, in a third, to be the Abbot by whom it was made. The inscriptions would of themselves establish the point that the base and the third stone of the shaft are parts of the same work, and that that work is a cross. The form of the third stone has already served to fix its exact place in the shaft of the cross. Turloch O'Conor was Monarch of Ireland from A. D. 1121 to 1156; Aed O'Ossin presided over St. Jarlath's from 1128 to 1150; hence the Tuam Cross belongs to the earlier part of the twelfth century.

Having ascertained the proper place for each por-

tion of the cross, let us now see how these several parts were kept together. We have already seen how firmly the first stone of the shaft is imbedded in the base; there are large mortice-holes at the junction of the first and second stones; a tenon let into these would make a strong joint; at the top of the second stone there is a similar mortice-hole, which served to unite this stone with the one immediately above it, which is now lost; the third stone has neither mortice nor tenon—it may have had tenons originally—and this stone has suffered so much injury, and been subjected to such apparently wanton destruction, that the tenons being gone is not surprising. The head of the cross has a large mortice at its lower part, and we have already observed a tenon at the top; so far, then, we find that considerable care has been taken to bind the several portions of the work together; but, in addition to this, there appear to have been other precautions taken to give stability to this very tall and slender monument, by firmly uniting it to a cathedral, erected at the same time as the cross, and by the same Abbot. Of the Cathedral of Tuam, erected by Aed O'Ossin, we have now only the chancel arch and some minor portions, the sculptures on which closely resemble those on the cross; and not only is there an agreement in the decorations of these two works, but it seems probable that the cross was actually united to and upheld by the cathedral, for at the top of the second stone of the shaft there is on one of the wide sides a part nearly a yard long which never had any ornament,



THE TUAM CROSS (C).

and here we find a large mortice-hole. If a long stone were firmly fixed in the cathedral wall, and, by means of a tenon, as firmly united to the cross, such a stay would give great strength. Again: one side of the head of the cross has two vertical grooves; these would allow strong iron bars to be inserted, which, if fastened to the walls of the cathedral, would keep the top of the cross steady. The same arrangement by which the second stone is supposed to have been joined to the church may have been used for the stone above it, where there is a blank now. These stays, by uniting the cross to the church, would give it strength so long as the church was firm; but the downfall of the larger pile would necessarily cause that of the lesser one attached to it; and hence, as O'Ossin's cathedral of Tuam is now all but gone, the cross has fallen along with it. Very tall and slender crosses are to be seen on the continent, attached to church walls in the same way as has been conjectured for the one we are now considering.

The inscriptions on the third stone are above twenty feet from the ground. How could these have been read, unless from some part of the cathedral which allowed the spectator to get near to, and on a level with, that part of the cross? Do we not find here an additional proof that the cross must have stood very close to the cathedral? If stays had been used in the manner suggested, they would be doubtless carved in correspondence with the main work, and so rendered decorative as well as useful. The two brackets at the sides of the

base were probably intended to support statues. Serpents, with platwork additions for the purpose of forming an interlaced pattern, form the subjects of the greater part of the carvings.

#### Tuam Cross (A).

The central subject is a representation of the entire cross, on a scale of half an inch to the foot. The side subjects represent the lower parts of the narrow sides of the cross as far as the first blank, to a scale of one eighth.

#### Tuam Cross (B).

The central subject shows one of the broad sides as far as the first blank, to a scale of one eighth; there are two views of the head of the cross, scale one twelfth; also, the two figures at the ends of the cross-arms. The carvings on the rims of the lower curves are represented on the right hand, and on the left hand the chequered pattern which is on the under side of the cross-arms.

At each side of the upper part of this print are represented the north and south sides of the base of the North Cross, Kilklispeen; and the patterns on the four faces of the curves of the east side of the same cross. The subject on one side of the base is a chariot, in which are seated two figures; there are two cavaliers and a couple of dogs. The subject on the opposite side of the base appears to be a funeral procession; a naked human figure, without a head, is laid on the back of an old horse; the legs hang over the neck, and the arms over the side of





TUAM CROSS DETAILS.



TUAM CROSS DETAILS.

the horse. A raven—emblem of death—is perched on the corpse, and a second raven has alighted on the horse's head. A female bearing a child follows the body. A young person seems to proceed as chief mourner. Two others bear, one a cross, another a pastoral staff; these are probably ecclesiastics.

#### Tuam Cross (C).

The central subject is the remaining wide side, at the top of which is seen the blank space and the mortice before mentioned. The other subjects are the four sides of the third stone. The scale is one eighth.

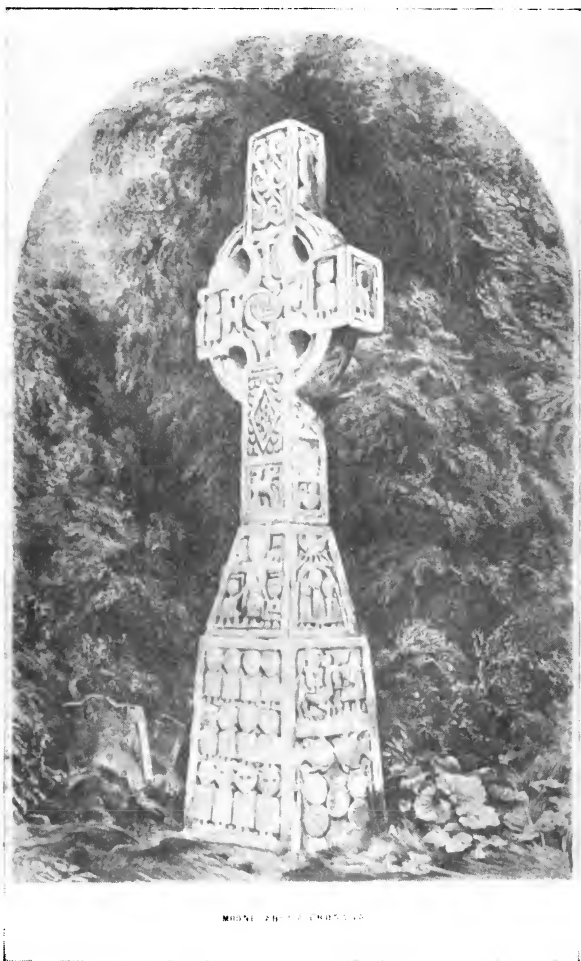
In some places the carvings are very much injured, as may be understood from the prints. The base has suffered the most. The third stone of the shaft has the upper half of the serpent pattern all but obliterated; it is shown on the left hand in the last-described print. The second stone of the shaft, where it unites with the first one, is broken away as far as is marked by a light shading in the same print. The pattern for this shaded part is supplied from conjecture.

## CHAPTER VI

### MOONE ABBEY CROSS

**T**ERMONFECHIN (pronounced Ternon-Fekin) is in the County Louth, about four miles north of Drogheda. The cross, though small, is of great interest. The carvings are, generally speaking, sharp and uninjured. The material is silicious sandstone. I learned on the spot that the cross has been shifted from its original position; the cap has been set on wrong, the side being turned to the front; and I suspect also that the present east side should be turned to the west; the base also is in very bad taste, and very probably modern. The cross is about eight feet six inches high.

In the print the present east side is represented on the left side. Christ crucified, with a sponge and spear bearers; the Holy Ghost, or an angel, and a couple of other figures, are in the centre of the cross. The curves are ornamented with platted bands and interlaced serpents; zig-zig and platted ornaments of excellent design are on the shaft; the base is circular, and without ornament. The present west side is on the right side of the print. Christ comes in judgment, bearing His cross and sceptre, and the human race issuing from the tombs, and also ornaments, are in the centre. The curves have, one a C ornament, terminating in serpents; another a platted pattern, ending



MOONE ABBEY CROSS (A).



MOONE ABBEY CROSS (B).

in dog's (?) heads; a third is the zig-zag; the fourth curve was never carved, or else had had the pattern totally destroyed. The shaft has at the top, immediately under the feet of Christ, a small panel of zig-zag ornament; next is a large panel of serpents interlacing, united in whirls by groups of threes and surrounding two human heads. The lower panel is a very peculiar and not inelegant pattern of a compound character, partaking of the C and the serpent type, united in whirls of threes, and, in this last characteristic, resembling the ornament in the panel above it. In the centre of the print these two panels are represented on a larger scale, above which is the end of one of the cross-arms, being ornamented with a compound of zig-zag and spirals. The other cross arm is without ornament; perhaps it was never carved. At each side of the centre, the sides of the shaft, and the rims of the curves, are given; interlaced animals of the dog type, interlaced bands, and zig-zags decorate the sides of the shaft; the lower rims have very beautiful ornaments of the C and the serpent type blended. On one of the upper rims is an interlaced pattern, on the other a zig-zag; this last is much injured.

The scale for the elevation of the crosses is one-twelfth; that for the details is one-eighth. Three separate stones constitute this cross, viz., the base, the cap, and the part between these.

#### Moone Abbey Cross (A).

Moone Abbey is near Ballitore, County Kildare. The cross is of granite, and the workmanship is rude;

its form and carvings give it considerable interest. The entire height is twelve feet nine inches; there is a tenon at the top, which shows that there was a crowning stone. The cross arms are very nearly four feet wide. This cross was, I understand, lying prostrate till lately.

On the west side of the cross, or its face, are below the Twelve Apostles; next Christ on the cross, with the sponge and spear bearers; next, a panel with a lion (?); above this is a lozenge-shaped band, within which are four serpents united at their tails, and also sixteen small bosses outside the lozenge. Above this in the centre of the cross are four serpents united in a whirl; at each side of the serpents are human figures, and at top a double S-like pattern, like the Grecian symbol for the ocean. At the right side below are the five loaves and two fishes, typical of Christ feeding the multitude; next the flight into Egypt; above which are the three Marys at the sepulchre, and the angel over it; an angel, human figures, and what seem to be animal forms, constitute the remaining subjects on this side. This scale is one-twelfth.

#### Moone Abbey Cross (B).

On the left hand of the print is an elevation of the side of the cross; at the bottom is a carving of beast and serpent forms combined. Above this is the Temptation of Christ (not so, there are three figures). The remaining subjects are beyond my comprehension. In the middle of the print is an elevation of the face of the Moone Abbey Cross; below is Mary



Magdalene, or the seven deadly sins, which—if either? (Daniel in lion's den) next Abraham's sacrifice. The Father of the Faithful is seated in a high-seated chair; Isaac lays his head quietly on a stool; the ram and thicket are seen above. The next panel contains the Fall of Man, over which is a panel containing four serpents united at the tails, and holding a couple of apples, type of the fall. In the centre of the cross is Christ; over this is a fish, the ancient type of Christ.

Between the two elevations are represented two very small crosses; the lower one is a chloritic slaty stone. I saw it at the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin. The other, also in the same place, is sandstone, and is singular for having a human figure whose legs terminate in an interlaced ornament. I have added to the representation of the fragment an outline, restoring a part of the head of the cross, in order to give a better idea of its singular design; zig-zag, and serpents ornament the two curves that remain. There is no ornament on these two small crosses except what I have represented. At the right side of the print are represented above and below the four sides of a carved stone, and in the middle four sides of another carved stone, both at Moone Abbey; serpents and other animals and interlaced bands are the subjects of these carvings; the material is granite. Scale, one-twelfth.

## CHAPTER VII

### CROSSES AT CLONMACNOISE

**C** LONMACNOISE is on the banks of the Shannon, about seven miles below Athlone, and in the King's County. The churchyard contains several ecclesiastical buildings, two round towers, two sculptured crosses and part of a third, and also a great many ancient grave-slabs, sculptured and inscribed with the names of eminent persons who flourished about a thousand years ago.

The two crosses are situated nearly north and south of each other; hence I have denominated them as the North and South Crosses respectively.

East Side of the North Cross, Clonmacnoise, King's County.

This cross is of siliceous sandstone, and consists of two stones, the base, and thence to the top. Entire height thirteen feet; width at the cross-arms four feet eight inches.

At the bottom of the shaft is a mutilated inscription, which Dr. Petrie (see his "Essay") says reads very plainly as follows: Orccoit do Colman dorroindi in chrossa ar in ri Flaind."

My copy is a facsimile. There is only room for three letters in the blank space at the beginning of the inscription. The doctor's version supplies eight letters there, that is, five letters too many; so far



EAST SIDE OF THE NORTH CROSS, CLONMACNOISE,  
KING'S COUNTY.



WEST SIDE OF THE NORTH CROSS, CLONMACNOISE,  
KING'S COUNTY.

the doctor's version is clearly erroneous. He supposes the cross to have been executed at the commencement of the tenth century.

The subject of the carving in the centre of the cross is Christ come to judge the world. Several of the slab gravestones are represented. Material sandstone; scale one twelfth. In the distance are seen the river Shannon and the ruins of a very strong castle, said to have been an archbishop's; the hill on which it is situated was moated.

West Side of the North Cross, Clonmacnoise,  
King's County.

The subject in the centre is the Crucifixion; that at the lower part of the shaft is the soldiers guarding the sepulchre. Scale one twelfth.

#### Details of Crosses.

On the outside right and left are represented the north and south sides of the base and shaft, lower rim of the ring, beneath the cross-arm, end of the cross-arm, upper rim of the ring, and sides of the upper arms of the North Cross at Clonmacnoise; in the lower part of the print are four curves from the ring of a cross in the island at Tynan Abbey, County Armagh; above these are three sides of a sculptured stone at Clonmacnoise, and to the right of these is the sceptre of Christ, from the North Cross, Clonmacnoise; above these are one side of the base, the two sides of the shaft, and the end of one of the cross-arms from a cross at Castledermot, County Kildare. The five subjects at top represent grave-

stones at Clonmacnoise. The sculptured stone at Clonmacnoise is only carved on three sides; the material is limestone. The material of the Castledermot Cross is granite; that of the other subjects sandstone. Scale one twelfth for all except Christ's sceptre and the C pattern on the other side; these are on a scale of one sixth. The C pattern is from under the rim of the North Cross, Clonmacnoise.

East Side of the South Cross, Clonmacnoise, King's  
County.

This cross is in the same churchyard as the north one. I have represented a number of ancient grave-slabs about its base; these are in the same place. The cross is about twelve feet high. The cross-arms are three feet nine inches wide. There is no tenon or mortice at top to keep the cap on. The boss on the left hand cross-arm is evidently unfinished. Material sandstone; scale one twelfth.

East Side of the South Cross, Clonmacnoise, King's  
County, and Crosses at Kilkeeran, County  
Kilkenny.

The details consist of the sides of the shaft, between which, below, is the top of one side of the base (I could not make out the patterns on the other side), above which are two curves of the ring to show what the patterns were; above these are the two lower rims of the ring, and at the top the two upper rims (partly uncarved), and the ornaments on the sides of the top arm, and at the out-



DETAILS OF CROSSES



DETAILS OF THE SOUTH CROSS. CLONMACNOISE,  
KING'S COUNTY.



side at top are the ends of the cross-arms. Scale one twelfth.

The other portion of the print represents crosses at Kilkecran churchyard, in the County Kilkenny. This burial ground is close to Scoughbridge, and about three miles from Carrick-on-Suir. The tall cross is about twelve feet high; it has had a cap, for there remains a tenon at the top. In its proportions it closely resembles the Tuam Cross. Material limestone; scale one twenty-fourth.

There are two crosses of the usual form in the Kilkeeran churchyard—one is richly ornamented, the other plain. The plain one is represented in the print, with its conical cap lying on the ground near it. The other cross has also a conical cap. The Kilklispeen crosses are near this place, so that we have four crosses with conical caps in this locality; I do not know of any others. The material of the conical capped crosses is sandstone.







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